

To: the Parliament of Romania

23 April 2020

Mr. **Robert Marius Cazanciuc**, Vice-President, acting as president of the Senate
Mr, **Marcel Ciulacu**, President of the Chamber of Deputies

To: parliamentary political parties

Mr. **Marcel Ciolacu**, interim President of the PSD
Mr. **Ludovic Orban**, President of the PNL
Mr. **Dan Barna**, President of the USR
Mr. **Victor Ponta**, President of the PRO Romania
Mr. **Eugen Tomac**, President of the PMP
Mr. **Kelemen Hunor**, President of the UDMR

OPEN LETTER REGARDING THE TRANSPARENCY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

Kind Sirs,

Representatives of the business environment and civil society in Romania wish to bring to your attention a very important topic for the good democratic functioning of the public institutions in our country, and for the transparency of the legislative system, open and accessible to the citizens.

Free access to information of public interest and an uninterrupted dialogue between decision-makers and citizens, whether they are part of civil society or the business community, are basic elements of democracy, especially in difficult, atypical situations, causing confusion in the population, as well as misinformation. Moreover, in these difficult situations we must not deviate from the fundamental values of democracy, and we must identify solutions to ensure that these values are not affected.

In a democratic society and (especially) in its most important legislative forum, the Parliament of Romania, the dialogue is indispensable. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that it currently suffers severely, not only because of the necessary restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 crisis, but also due to internal decisions, which we believe should be reconsidered.

We believe that an open dialogue between the state and society as a whole can come to the aid of the citizens, the employees or the employers, thus contributing to the support and, more importantly, to the revival of the national economy, as well as to the strengthening of confidence at a time when Romania needs it in order to overcome this moment of crisis.

With this letter, we strongly urge you not to restrict the participation of business and civil society representatives in the online meetings of the specialized committees of the Romanian Parliament, in order to support our views, so that the legislative circuit will continue to operate based on transparency, and the policies and measures taken by the political decision-makers are in line with the real needs of the society, based on the opinions expressed by all the stakeholders. At the same time, the sessions can be recorded and made available to the general public on the institutions' websites.

We would also like to stress that taking into account the real needs of the Romanian civil society in its broadest sense, but also their contribution to informing the decision-makers about the difficulties

faced during this period is of vital importance. The NGO's have in turn a grassroots understanding of the social and economic situations, providing direct support and assistance, beyond the monitoring mechanisms on the observance of fundamental values (e.g. human rights).

We believe that only by maintaining and strengthening **the solid partnership**, based on dialogue, **between the state, trade unions, the business environment and the civil society**, can effective policies be proposed and adopted, whose response will correspond to the realities faced by the citizens and the business sector. In view of the current situation, this partnership can continue to be maintained by using electronic means of communication, without affecting the transparency and quality of the debates and the decision-making process. In the hope that we will find in you a partner open to dialogue, we trust that you will respond positively to our herewith forwarded request.

Signed,

1. ActiveWatch
2. APADOR-CH (Asociația pentru Apărarea Drepturilor Omului în România, Comitetul Helsinki)
3. Asociația Oamenilor de Afaceri din România-AOAR
4. Asociația Patronală a Industriei de Software și Servicii
5. Asociația Registrul Roman de Lobby-ARRL
6. Asociația Română a Companiilor de Exploatare și Producție și Petroliera- ROPEPCA
7. Asociația Civică
8. Asociația Civică Miliția Spirituală
9. Asociația Parcul Natural Văcărești
10. Camera de Comerț Americană în România
11. Camera de Comerț Franceză în România
12. Camera de Comerț Germană în România
13. Camera De Comerț Olandeză în România
14. Centrul Filia
15. Centrul pentru Inovare Publică
16. CeRe: Centrul de Resurse pentru participare publică
17. Confederația Caritas România
18. Confederația Națională pentru Antreprenoriat Feminin
19. Confederația Patronală Concordia
20. Consiliul Investitorilor Străini
21. Dizabnet
22. Expert Forum
23. Federația Patronală Petrol și Gaze
24. Federația Asociațiilor Companiilor de Utilități din Energie
25. Federația Industriei Hoteliere din România
26. Federația Patronală a Transportatorilor din România
27. Federația Patronală a Serviciilor Financiare
28. Federația Patronală a Rețelelor de Comerț
29. Federația Patronatelor din Industria Auto
30. Federația Organizațiilor Neguvernamentale pentru Copil – FONPC
31. Federația Organizațiilor Neguvernamentale pentru Servicii Sociale – FONSS
32. Fundația pentru Dezvoltarea Societății Civile – FDSC
33. Funky Citizens
34. Greenpeace
35. HR Management Club
36. Romanian Business Leaders -RBL
37. Salvați Copiii România
38. Uniunea Națională a Societăților de Asigurare și Reasigurare din România